## **ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008**



Little River Bridge Mitigation Site Moore County TIP No. R-0210A



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUM	MARY	,	1
1.0	INTF	RODUCTION	2
	1.1	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	2
	1.2	PURPOSE	2
	1.3	PROJECT HISTORY	2
2.0	HYD	ROLOGY	4
	2.1	SUCCESS CRITERIA	4
	2.2	HYDROLOGIC DESCRIPTION	4
	2.3	RESULTS OF HYDROLOGIC MONITORING	4
		2.3.1 Site Data	
		2.3.2 Climatic Data	
	2.4	CONCLUSIONS	7
3.0	VEG	ETATION	9
	3.1	SUCCESS CRITERIA	9
	3.2	DESCRIPTION OF PLANTED AREAS	9
	3.3	RESULTS OF VEGETATION MONITORING	10
	3.4	CONCLUSIONS	10
4.0	OVE	RALL CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS	10

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Site I	Location Map	3
Figure 2. Moni	itoring Gauge Location Map	5
Figure 3. Hydro	ologic Monitoring Results	6
Figure 4. 30-70	0 Percentile Graph	8
	<u>LIST OF TABLES</u>	
Table 1. Hydro	ologic Monitoring Results	7
Table 2. Veget	tative Monitoring Results (Hardwood Areas)	10
	<u>APPENDICES</u>	
APPENDIX A	GAUGE DATA GRAPHS	
APPENDIX B	PHOTO AND VEGETATION PLOT LOCATIONS, SITE PHOTOS	<b>.</b>

#### SUMMARY

The following report summarizes the monitoring activities that have occurred in 2008 at the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site. The 2008 monitoring year represents the third year of hydrologic and vegetation monitoring following construction. The site must demonstrate hydrologic and vegetation success for a minimum of five years or until the site is deemed successful. The site was constructed to serve as mitigation for impacts associated with the US 1 Bypass in Moore County.

In February 2006, groundwater monitoring gauges were installed to monitor hydrology on the site. Four groundwater gauges and one rain gauge were positioned on the restoration site. There are also three reference gauges that were installed prior to construction. The reference gauges are located directly adjacent to the constructed site within the preservation area.

Hydrologic success criteria are based on the approved mitigation plan and require that the site demonstrate saturation or inundation within 12 inches of the soil surface for a consecutive 12.5% of the growing season during years of normal rainfall.

2008 represents the third year for hydrology monitoring. Three of the four groundwater restoration gauges met the success criteria for 2008 with one of the gauges recording hydrology for 7% of the growing season. The three reference gauges recorded jurisdictional hydrology above the required 12.5% of the growing season.

Vegetation monitoring in the restoration area yielded 593 trees/shrubs per acre. This average is above the minimum success criteria of 320 trees/shrubs per acre for Year 3.

Based on the results from the third year of monitoring, NCDOT will continue to monitor vegetation and hydrology at the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site.

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Description

The Little River Bridge Mitigation Site serves as mitigation for T.I.P R-0210A, which constructed the US 1 Bypass in Moore County (Figure 1). The 14.8-acre site is located in Moore County 0.75 mile southeast of the town of Vass and is on either side of the Little River. The site can be accessed via US 1 Business South on the northeastern site boundary. The site includes 6.4 acres of restoration and 8.4 acres of preservation of bottomland hardwood forest. Reference areas onsite were utilized to provide reference data for restoration monitoring.

#### 1.2 Purpose

In order to demonstrate successful mitigation, hydrologic and vegetation monitoring must be conducted for a minimum of five years or until the site is deemed successful. Vegetation success criteria states that at least 320 trees/acre must survive through Year 3. A ten percent mortality rate will be accepted in Year 4 (288 trees/acre) and another ten percent in Year 5, resulting in a required survival rate of 260 trees/acre. Hydrologic success criteria are based on the approved mitigation plan and require that the site demonstrate saturation or inundation within 12 inches of the soil surface for a consecutive 12.5% of the growing season during years of normal rainfall. This report includes analyses of hydrologic and vegetation monitoring results, discussions of local climatic conditions throughout the growing season, and site photographs.

#### 1.3 Project History

2005	Reference Gauges Installed				
January 2006	Site Constructed				
February 2006	Site Planted				
February 2006	Monitoring Gauges Installed				
March-November 2006	Hydrologic Monitoring (Year 1)				
June 2006	Vegetation Monitoring (Year 1)				
March-November 2007	Hydrologic Monitoring (Year 2)				
June 2007	Vegetation Monitoring (Year 2)				
March-November 2008	Hydrologic Monitoring (Year 3)				
June 2008	Vegetation Monitoring (Year 3)				

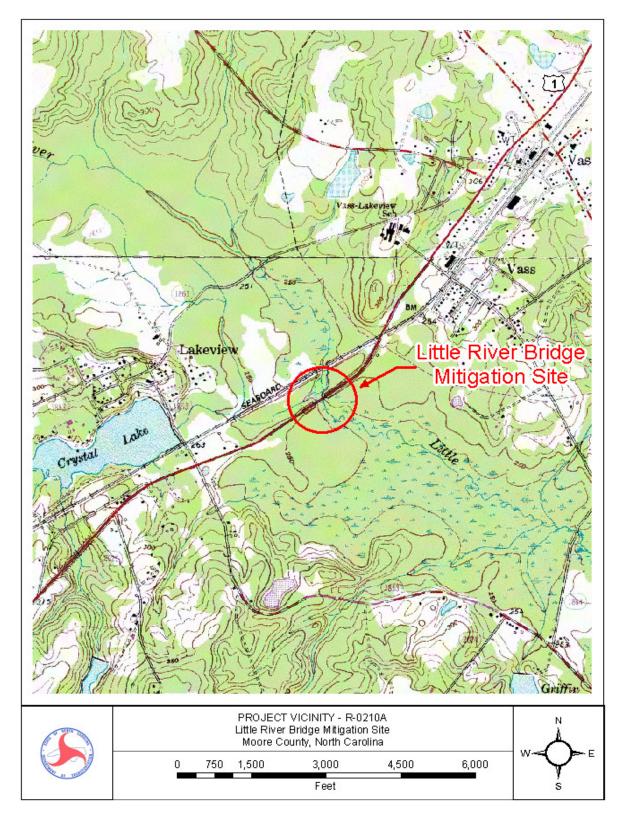


Figure 1. Site Location Map

#### 2.0 HYDROLOGY

#### 2.1 Success Criteria

The hydrologic success criteria established for the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site, as stipulated in the approved mitigation plan and subsequent revisions, require that the site demonstrate saturation or inundation within 12 inches of the soil surface for a consecutive 12.5% of the growing season during years of normal rainfall.

The growing season in Moore County begins on March 23 and ends November 7. These dates correspond to a 50% probability that air temperature will drop to 28° after March 23 and before November 7<sup>1</sup>; thus, the growing season is 228 days.

#### 2.2 Hydrologic Description

Four groundwater monitoring gauges were installed within the site's restoration area (Figure 2) in February 2006. There are also three reference gauges that were installed prior to construction in the existing wetlands that are adjacent to the constructed site. A rain gauge is also located on the site to assist in comparison of the rainfall data (supplied by the NC State Climate Office) from an official weather station in Carthage. The groundwater gauges record water levels on a daily basis.

#### 2.3 Results of Hydrologic Monitoring

#### 2.3.1 Site Data

The maximum number of consecutive days that saturation occurred within 12 inches of the ground surface was determined for each groundwater monitoring gauge. This number was converted into a percentage of the 228-day growing season (March 23 – November 7). Table 1 provides the 2008 hydrologic results; Figure 3 is a graphical representation of these results. Appendix A includes graphs of the data recorded at each groundwater gauge. Daily rainfall events recorded at the onsite rain gauge are included on each of the groundwater gauge plots.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Soil Conservation Service, <u>Soil Survey of Moore County, North Carolina</u>, 1995.

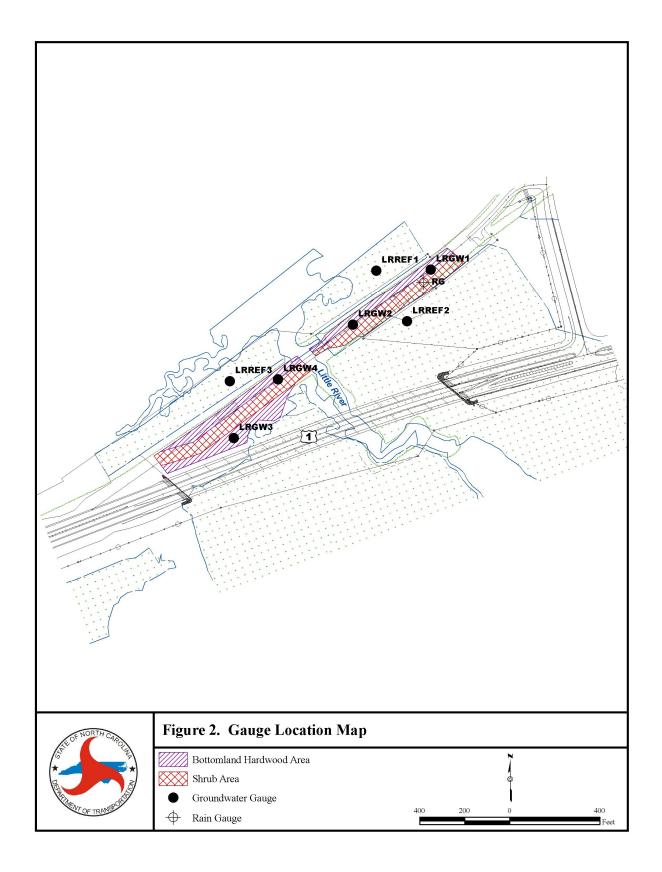


Figure 2. Monitoring Gauge Location Map

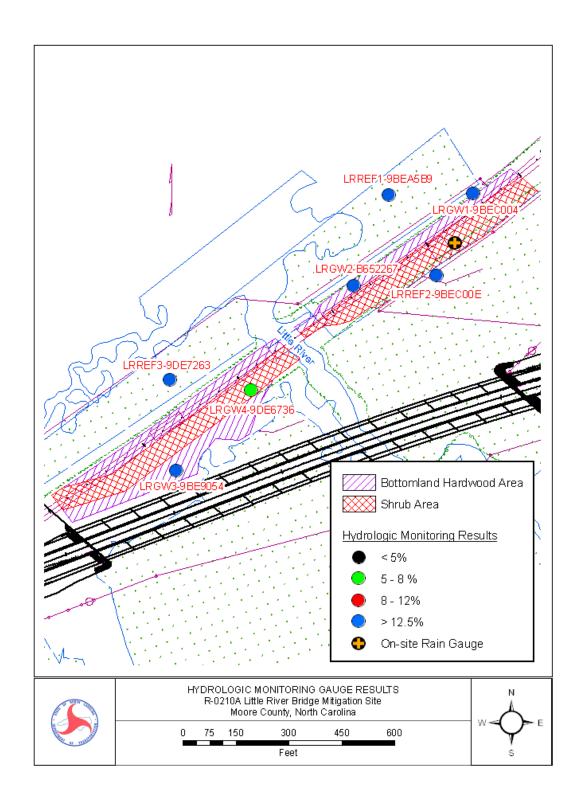


Figure 3. Hydrologic Monitoring Results

**Table 1**. Hydrologic Monitoring Results

Monitoring Gauge	< 5%	5-8%	8-12%	> 12.5%	Actual %	Success Dates
LR-GW1+				Х	27.0	March 23-May 23
					27.0	Sept 6- Oct 7
LR-GW2+				X		March 23-May 9
	20.9		20.9	July 24-Aug 24		
						Aug 27- Oct 8
LR-GW3+				X	26.5	March 23-May 22
LR-GW4		X			7.0	
LR-REF1+				Х	23.0	March 23-May 14
LR-REF2 +				Х	27.4	March 23-May 24
					27.4	Sept 6- Oct 14
LR-REF3+				X	21.3	March 23-May 10

Shaded gauges are reference gauges.

Groundwater Monitoring Gauge 4 did not meet the success criterion in 2008. The close proximity to the Little River may be causing a drawdown effect on the gauge. NCDOT will continue to monitor this gauge and may install additional gauges if necessary to determine whether or not wetland hydrology is present in this portion of the site.

#### 2.3.2 Climatic Data

Figure 4 is a comparison of the 2008 monthly rainfall to the historical precipitation (collected between 1977 and 2008) for Carthage, North Carolina. This comparison gives an indication of how 2008 relates to historical data in terms of climate conditions. The NC State Climate Office provided all historical rainfall information. For 2008, January, June, and October recorded below average rainfall. The months of February, March, May, July, August, November, and December recorded average rainfall, while April and September recorded above average rainfall. Overall, 2008 was an average rainfall year.

#### 2.4 CONCLUSIONS

The 2008 monitoring year represents the third year of hydrologic monitoring for the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site. Three of the four groundwater restoration gauges met the success criteria for 2008 with one of the gauges recording hydrology for 7% of the growing season. The three reference gauges recorded jurisdictional hydrology above the required 12.5% of the growing season. NCDOT will continue to monitor the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site for hydrology.

<sup>+</sup>Gauges met success during average rainfall months (March, May, July, August, and November).

#### Little River Bridge Mitigation Site Figure 4 (30-70 Percentile Graph) Carthage, NC

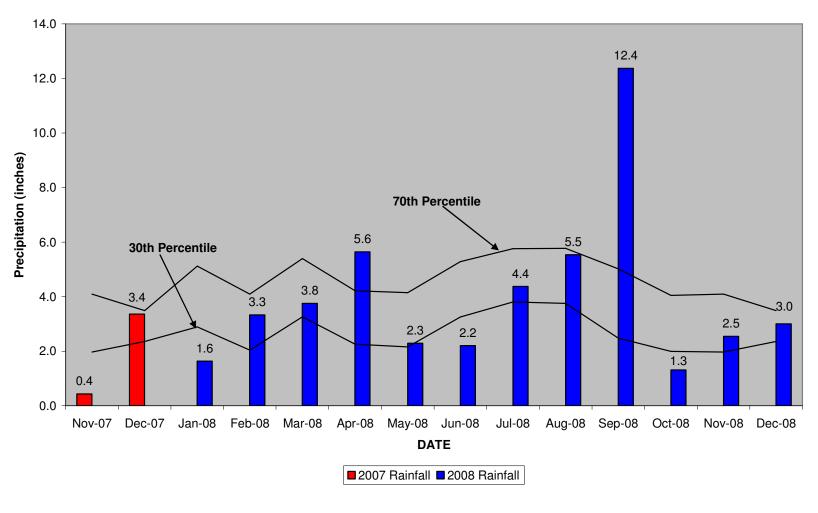


Figure 4. 30-70 Percentile Graph

## 3.0 VEGETATION: LITTLE RIVER BRIDGE MITIGATION SITE (YEAR 3 MONITORING)

#### 3.1 Success Criteria

The projects success criteria state that at least 320 trees/acre must survive through Year 3. A ten percent mortality rate will be accepted in Year 4 (288 trees/acre) and another ten percent in Year 5, resulting in a required survival rate of 260 trees/acre.

#### 3.2 Description of Species

The following tree and shrub species were planted in the Wetland Restoration Area:

#### Tree Area:

Taxodium distichum, Baldcypress Nyssa aquatica, Water Tupelo Quercus phellos, Willow Oak Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak

#### Shrub Area:

Cephalanthus occidentalis, Buttonbush Aronia arbutifolia, Red Chokeberry Cornus amomum, Silky Dogwood Alnus serrulata, Tag Alder

#### 3.3 Results of Vegetation Monitoring

**Table 2.** Vegetation Monitoring Results (Hardwood Areas)

Plot#	Baldcypress	Water Tupelo	Willow Oak	Swamp Chestnut Oak	Buttonbush	Red Chokeberry	Silky Dogwood	Tag Alder	Total (Year 3)	Total (at planting)	Density (Trees/Acre)
1 (Trees)	2	6	1 0	3 1					4 9	6 0	5 5 5
2 (Shrubs)					3	9	2 2	5	3 9	4 2	6 3 1
Average Density (Trees & Shrubs/Acre)										5 9 3	

**Site Notes:** Other species noted: *Juncus* sp., goldenrod, pokeberry, pine, smartweed, sweetgum, fennel, dogwood, kudzu, woolgrass, red maple, and various grasses.

#### 3.4 Conclusions

There were 2 vegetation monitoring plots established throughout the 4.7-acre planting area. As noted in the 2007 monitoring report, the shrub area was to be supplementally planted in March 2008 due to low survival rates. The shrub plot numbers for 2008 reflect the supplemental planting. The 2008 vegetation monitoring of the site revealed an average tree density of 593 trees/shrubs per acre. This average is well above the minimum success criteria of 320 trees/shrubs per acre for Year 3. The Little River Site has met the success criteria for 2008 monitoring year.

#### 4.0 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2008 monitoring year represents the third year of hydrologic monitoring for the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site. Three of the four groundwater restoration gauges met the success criteria for 2008. The three existing reference gauges recorded jurisdictional hydrology above the required 12.5% of the growing season.

Vegetation monitoring yielded 593 trees/shrubs per acre. This average is well above the minimum success criteria of 320 trees/shrubs per acre.

NCDOT will continue to monitor the Little River Bridge Mitigation Site for vegetation and hydrology.

# APPENDIX A GAUGE DATA GRAPHS

#### **APPENDIX B**

# PHOTO AND VEGETATION PLOT LOCATIONS AND SITE PHOTOS

# Little River Bridge

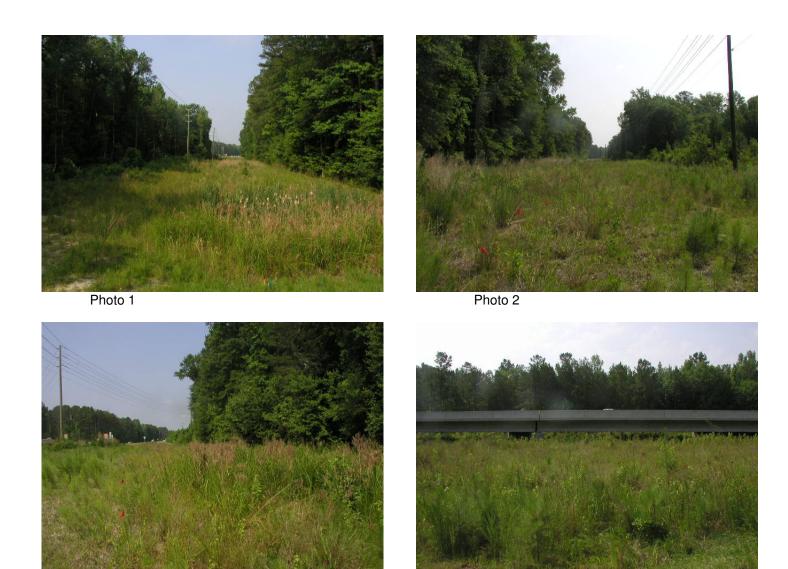
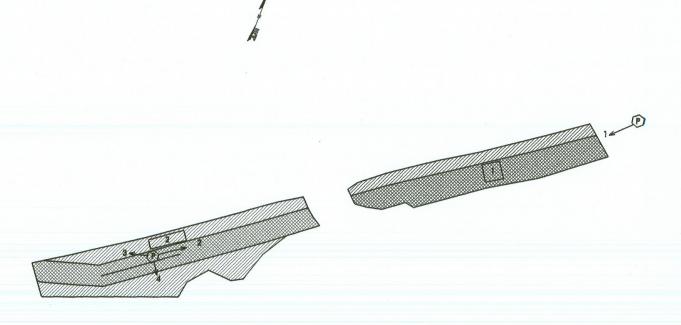


Photo 4

Photo 3



P	Photo Point Locations
	Bottomland Hardwood Vegetation Plot
	Shrub Vegetation Plot
	Bottomland Hardwood Planting
	Shrub Planting

Vass Bypass – Little River Bridge